

ATTACHMENT C



Muslim Association of Virginia

2/17/2022

To: Judge Brinkema

My name is Rafi Uddin Ahmed; I have been a resident of Virginia for almost 45 years, up until January of 2022 I had been a small business owner for last 33 years, In my spare time I have been volunteering in non-profit organizations in different capacities.

My purpose of writing you today is to provide character witness for Dr. Farhaad Riyaz. I have known the Riyaz family for the past 20 years and have watched Farhaad from a teenager to now a family man. Beside from the legal issue that he is facing currently, I have found Farhaad to a very polite and helpful young man. My eldest son Sami Ahmed who is few years younger than Farhaad remembers as a good mentor during youth filed trip and other activities.

My personal experience with Farhaad was when my late mother who passed away in 2018 was on hospice care at our home Farhaad's mother Dr. Rashida Rahman would voluntarily come to our home to check on my mother and answer any of our questions and just to provide support to our family, Farhaad had just finished his medical school and begun his residency, he would tag along with his mother to our house regularly. I will never forget the compassion, patience, and assistance the mother and son team provided to our family.

The young man Farhaad has made mistakes, as I understand you will be sentencing him soon, I am requesting you to show leniency during this process. I conclude with this prayer by President Abraham Lincoln. May God almighty grant that the cause of truth, justice, and humanity shall in no wise suffer at my hands.

Best,

Rafi Uddin Ahmed

571-334-3011

president@daralnoor.org

President, Muslim Association of Virginia

Imran Aslam MD

470 North Thomas St. Arlington VA Apt 402 22203

(810) 287-2488

laslam2414@gmail.com

Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema:

My name is Imran Aslam and I am dermatologist working in private practice in northern Virginia for the last two years. I've had the pleasure of knowing Farhaad Riyaz for the last 5 years. We initially met when I was a medical student and he was a resident at Henry Ford. From the moment I met Farhaad I was enamored by his charisma, genuine personality and kindness. I vividly remember how stressful the application process for dermatology was and I was so grateful when Farhaad generously offered me advice on how to improve my chances of matching into the field. Since that time as a medical student we corresponded periodically; however, it wasn't until I started applying for my first job as an attending that Farhaad once again came to my assistance. I desperately needed mentorship and Farhaad selflessly guided me through the job application process, contract negotiation, and overall strategies to ensure a successful career. I remember after spending over an hour with him on the phone, I was amazed at how this busy mohs surgeon was kind enough to take so much time to mentor me while expecting nothing in return.

I am writing this letter in support of Farhaad in light of his recent guilty plea in order to provide you with a better understanding of who he is a person and what he has meant to me. I admit that I was deeply saddened when I learned of what he pled guilty to; however, I know for certain that this recent infraction does not define him as a person nor is representative of his character. The truth is I have always admired Farhaad and looked up to him as a role model. He is undeniably gifted and has excelled in all aspects of his career and life in general. He has this natural confidence and ease about him that makes him very approachable and well liked amongst his peers. He is dedicated to helping others and I will be forever grateful for his friendship and mentorship. I am hopeful that he will get the second chance that we all deserve.

Thank you so much for considering my experience with Farhaad in determining his judgment. I am available anytime to confirm the contents of this letter as necessary.

Sincerely,

Imran Aslam

Mohammad Hussain Dar, MD

6 Alaric Ter, Boston, MA 02132 • 940-391-1591 • Mohammad.H.Dar@gmail.com

March 9th, 2022

Dear Honorable Judge,

I am writing this letter to speak to the character of Dr. Farhaad Riyaz as I have known of him.

I met Dr. Riyaz in his first year out of medical school in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 2013-2014. He was pursuing his first year of residency at that time as I was finishing my own last year of medical school. Through this year, he became a colleague and a guide as I pursued my own residency applications.

I found Dr. Riyaz to be a compassionate and caring physician and friend. He expressed passion in caring for the patients under his current care and the patients he would take care of once he had finished his specialty training pathway. He carried himself with a kind manner fitting of a considerate physician, and was doting in the care and advice he gave to those he mentored around him. Dr. Riyaz knew that I had been caring for my elderly mother since the start of my medical training and constantly asked how my mother was doing and how he could help her out (and offload me by doing so during a busy time). Even when we've spoken throughout the years to catch up, his first question is always to ask how my mother is doing.

Dr. Riyaz graduated in the top of his medical school class. He had so far established himself as a reputable and knowledgeable physician in his field. I believe he continues to possess the potential and capability to be an optimal physician in his field – knowledgeable, respectable, trustworthy, caring, and kind. He has much work and redemption to do to get there however.

Dr. Riyaz has certainly made a serious mistake in judgment in the case brought before you. He has expressed to me his remorse around it and his desire to both make amends and to grow beyond this episode so that his good works may once again narrate his story and his care for others.

As caretaker for my own mother, I am the youngest of four siblings in my own family. My elder brothers have struggled with demons around addiction and mental health. This is not the first time I've had to write to a judge on another's behalf. However, I have seen in the long view of my brothers' paths that they have most benefitted when they have been allowed a path to recovery and redemption. The times when punishment was meted upon them without such a path only further exacerbated their pain and their paralysis within a destructive cycle.

To my knowledge, Dr. Riyaz's errors have been his own and have not impacted his patient care. Thus I am writing to express the good character of Dr. Riyaz as I have known it and encourage the court to take this into account, and request that you allow him a path that of course holds him accountable and able to make necessary amends, but one that also permits him to keep his ability to practice medicine without interruption.

During these days, other colleagues of mine have shared with me their own recollections of Farhaad's good works: his leading teams at summer camp for children of special needs, his soft temperament that could turn a homesick child's tears into laughter, and his talent for making everyone in a room around him feel important and valued. He has been known to end a long clinical day by mentoring junior clinicians despite how tired he might be. And he is known to quickly travel to be a colleague's side when misfortune has fallen on them.

I am hopeful from my experience knowing him that such a pathway of allowing him to continue his practice will permit him to best make amends, face up to his errors, continue his good works in patient care, and allow him the latitude to continue further good works as a productive and beneficial member of society.

Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Dar'.

~Mohammad Dar, MD



ART OF DERMATOLOGY

MEDICAL • SURGICAL • COSMETIC

Chethana Gottam, MD
Dermatologist/Practice Owner, Art of Dermatology
28903 Woodward Ave
Berkley, MI 48072
815-985-1801 (mobile)
cgottam@theartofderm.com

March 11, 2022

Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema:

My name is Chethana Gottam, and I am a practicing dermatologist in the metro Detroit area. I am the former employer of Dr. Farhaad Riyaz. He worked at Art of Dermatology as our Mohs Micrographic and Dermatologic Surgeon from February 2020 to January 2021. I am writing a character letter on his behalf. I have known Dr. Riyaz since 2019, both as a friend and as a colleague.

I respect the fact that Dr. Riyaz has pled guilty to a crime, but I am writing this letter to offer a fuller picture of him as a person. As I am sure you are well aware, mental illness played a role in Dr. Riyaz's crime. As a society, we are plagued by mental illness, but the signs and symptoms are often dismissed by a physician, as we will blame stress and anxiety above true illness. I firmly believe mental illness led to the decisions made by Dr. Riyaz, as they are characteristic of Dr. Riyaz's mental health condition.

I never witnessed, nor did any staff member or patient at Art of Dermatology witness any wrongdoing by Dr. Riyaz during his time with us. He displayed the utmost integrity and honor, taking exceptional care of patients. His surgical outcomes were excellent, as was his bedside manner. His interaction with staff and me was always professional. It is incredible to think that despite everything he was going through personally, he operated as one of the kindest, caring, and skilled physicians I have ever worked with.

Apart from the time he spent working in my clinic, Dr. Riyaz has gone above and beyond in the arena of community service. He re-defines the concept of giving back to the community. He has participated in numerous activities such as performing pro-bono medical exams for individuals tortured/injured overseas seeking asylum in the United States; volunteer physician in Fairfax and Washtenaw Counties providing COVID-19 testing and vaccination; the ADAMS Compassionate Healthcare Network as the sole dermatologist serving a low-income, high-need population AND the Arlington Free Clinic as one of only 2 dermatologists serving a low-income, high need population. His charitable efforts are too numerous to detail in this letter, but suffice it to say he goes above and beyond to give back to the community.

I would like to thank the court for their attention to this letter. I ask that you consider the circumstances as a whole, and I ask on the behalf of my colleague for you to consider his integrity, professionalism, and exceptional patient care when rendering your decision. I am available to confirm the facts of this letter as necessary.

Regards,

Chethana Gottam, MD

Adel S. Haque, MD, BS, FAAD

Georgia Tech, BS Biochemistry '13
Medical College of Georgia, MD '17
Gwinnett Medical Center - Internship '18
University of South Florida - Dermatology '21
Associate Dermatologist at Dermatology Partners
Assistant Professor Thomas Jefferson University
678-733-2428

Highest recommendation letter for character

60 N 23rd St, Apt 2301
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Haque.adel@gmail.com

Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema:

My name is Dr. Adel Haque and I am a dermatologist currently practicing in the State of Pennsylvania. It is my honor to write this letter of character recommendation for my good friend Dr. Farhaad Riyaz whom I have known for six years now. Dr Riyaz and I first met at the AAD Dermatology conference in Washington DC in 2016 where he was volunteering and have maintained a friendship over the past six years that includes not only a working relationship, helping each other with difficult to treat cases in patients but also a personal relationship of friendship and mentorship.

I am writing this letter on behalf of Dr Riyaz to exonerate his character beyond his guilty plea of admission which I understand that he has submitted. Dr. Riyaz has always been a very respected member of our community both in the professional and personal world. Many times he has gone out of his way to explain how he would treat a difficult case or how some of us younger generation of dermatologist should help expand our practice as it relates to both our professional and personal life. Dr Riyaz has always been readily available for any advice, mentorship, or volunteer work needed. We are part of a small organization together within a much larger group of dermatologist, and Dr Riyaz consistently brings expertise and a steady hand of knowledge and guidance to our organization and has been a vital part of growing our organization which is dedicated to bringing the best patient care possible by instilling a sense of community and improving patient health outcomes. When our group was getting started and needed a leader, Dr. Riyaz's name was mentioned multiple times by multiple people including myself as a person who would be an excellent leader for our group as a consistent source of work and knowledge that would help us expand and better our patient outcomes.

I appreciate your time and consideration of reading my letter during this difficult process. I am available any time to qualify my information or my credentials.

Sincerely,
Adel S. Haque

Leanne Kluge
Mohs office manager

18828 N. Highlite Dr.
Clinton Twp., MI 48035
(586) 457-7114
leannekluge@yahoo.com

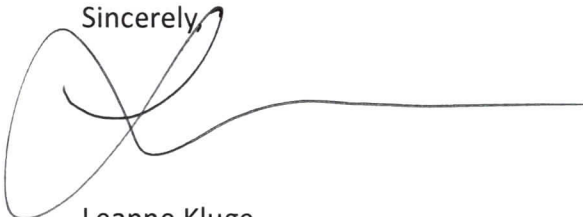
Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema,

I am writing on behalf of Farhaad Riyaz. I have worked closely with him for ten months at Art of Dermatology. I understand the seriousness of this matter but hope the court will show some leniency.

Farhaad may have made some mistakes with the choices that he made but the fact that he pled guilty shows he is remorseful. During my time spent with him I have come to respect him as a physician, surgeon, husband, father and friend. He truly cares about others. He is an intelligent, kind, hard working and amazing person. If you knew him as I do, you would feel the same about him. When I heard about what he did, I was shocked. I could not believe this was something he would do. When I heard he pled guilty, this did not surprise me because of the person he really is. He realized his mistake and owned up to it. The mistakes that he made should not define him as a person. What should define him is the person he worked so hard to become, a caring physician that treats his patients and staff as if they were his own family. He has been an inspiration to our mohs team, teaching each of us the art of mohs. There is not a day goes by that he is not missed by all of us.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope you will take leniency with him. Please realize that we have all made choices that were not right or that we are proud of, but this should not define him for the future. You can reach me anytime if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Leanne Kluge

Salik Muhammad
675 Edwards Ave
Milton ON
L9T 6B3
226 750 9289
msalik945@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern,

I am Farhaad's first cousin and I have known him my entire life (29 years).

I am writing this letter to tell you that Farhaad is someone that I love dearly. Farhaad is my cousin from my dad's side. He's an amazing son to his parents, an incredible brother to his siblings, a kind father to his daughter, a loving husband to his wife and a generous and outstanding older brother to me. He has always been there for me as a role model and mentor. And I have seen him accomplish amazing things and all do countless good deeds to better the lives of his family members and his community. Farhaad is someone who I have always looked up to for every aspect of my life. He has been a role model to me in my fitness journey, in my academic journey and business journey. When I was in university and felt like dropping out, Farhaad would call me to encourage and motivate me to not give up and continue pushing myself so I can have a better a future.

Not only that, he has always been generous when it comes to donating to his local community charities and also supporting under privileged communities overseas. Last year my fiancé and I did a small fundraiser to help refugees in Syria during the month of Ramadan as most of these refugees had no access to food or running water to perform their full day fasts. As soon as he found out that I was raising money, my cousin did not let me down and he was the highest donor! We used that money to help provide food and clothing to families suffering in the bitter cold at the Syrian border and he did not even ask me for any credit for it.

As a physician he is someone who loves what he does and always puts his patients above everyone else. I have seen how passionate he is about providing quality health care to people and his work ethic inspires me to aspire for greatness and be a more productive member of society that contributes more than he takes.

Finally, I want to thank the court and ask that they take all of these facts into consideration before sentencing my cousin who is an outstanding citizen to the community. I understand that he has made a mistake but please look at all the good he has done for society for most of his life. I am available to confirm all these facts if necessary.

Sincerely,

Salik Muhammad



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March 2, 2022

To: Whom it May Concern

Re: Letter of Reference for Dr. Farhaad Riyaz

Dr. Farhaad Riyaz joined Arlington Free Clinic's (AFC) volunteer program in July of 2020 and has served as a volunteer dermatologist on a monthly basis for the past one-and-a-half years.

Arlington Free Clinic is a non-profit organization providing free, quality healthcare to low-income, uninsured residents of Arlington – the majority of whom are immigrants to the United States. We rely upon volunteers to provide the almost 9,500 medical visits we offer each year to over 1,600 individuals from different cultural groups. AFC volunteers represent the best of the medical profession, giving generously of their time and talents to help others.

Dr. Riyaz is a valued member of our volunteer team. Staff and volunteers find him easy to work with and he is always mindful and caring with our patients. He began service with us during what was arguably the most chaotic time we have experienced as an organization – during a pandemic which has disproportionately affected our patient population. As a physician with a specialty that is not always easily transferred to virtual care, Dr. Riyaz has come onsite regularly to treat patients throughout the pandemic and prior to available COVID vaccinations. He always does his best to make himself available for last minute shift requests or phone consults between onsite visits. With only two volunteer dermatologists in our program, his care is important to our program.

By volunteering with Arlington Free Clinic, Dr. Riyaz demonstrates his commitment to providing high-quality healthcare to underserved residents and supporting his community.

Sincerely,

Kate Nadeau
Director of Volunteer Resources



Department of Dermatology
Henry Ford Hospital

David M. Ozog, M.D.,

Chairman Department of Dermatology
C.S. Livingood Chair in Dermatology
Co-Director Transplant Clinics
Division of Mohs and Dermatological
Surgery

3031 West Grand Boulevard
Detroit, MI 48202-2689
(313) 916-4060 Office
(313) 916-2093 Fax
(734) 716-2076 Cell
Email: dozog1@hfhs.org

March 13, 2022

To: Whom It May Concern

Re: Farhaad Riyaz

I have known Dr Riyaz since he was a medical student. He completed a three-year Dermatology residency in our department and was then recommended by us for a prestigious micrographic oncologic surgery fellowship at Northwestern University. While I have no knowledge or understanding of the circumstances leading to his conviction, I feel compelled to share my personal experiences with Dr Riyaz.

During his time with us, he was a well-liked resident by the senior staff, fellow residents, and support staff, including the medical assistants. He has exceptional surgical skills and completed several research publications with me. He was always conscientious and kind toward his fellow workers. I gave him my highest recommendation for fellowship and personally contacted directors on his behalf.

The training he received and the skill he possesses, make a difference in the patients he treats. Timely treatment of skin cancer is important, particularly since care was delayed by many due to concerns surrounding the Covid pandemic.

Let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss Dr Riyaz further.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Ozog". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

David Ozog MD, FAAP, FACMS
Chairman Department of Dermatology
C.S. Livingood Chair in Dermatology
Dozog1@hfhs.org

Zuhair H. Peracha MD
16866 Horseshoe Drive
Northville MI, 48168
(734)934-2374
zuhairperacha@gmail.com

Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema,

My name is Zuhair Peracha and I am Farhaad's brother-in-law. I first met Farhaad at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, VA. We became good friends as we navigated a challenging pre-med curriculum in a new city.

He was someone who you could always reach out to for help and you knew he would enthusiastically help. Whether it was technical help with a powerpoint presentation, last minute practice for our African Dance final exam (we both knew I was the worst dancer in a 100-person class), or comforting company on a quiet Saturday night when you were feeling homesick, he never let you down.

He is also one of the hardest working and most capable people I know. He majored in Biomedical Engineering, by far the hardest possible pre-med major and excelled. Even among our peers, who all went on to become physicians, he stood out as one of the smartest and most accomplished.

It was 5 years later that I introduced Farhaad to one of the most special people in my life, my younger sister Manal. She is caring, smart, kind, and exceptional in every way. Sure enough, they got to know each other and eventually got engaged and married.

They went on to have beautiful baby, Lena, who has been the light of their lives but also has challenged them in many ways. Lena, although very intelligent, is developmentally delayed and requires appointments with speech and physical therapists on a weekly basis. He has played an active role in Lena's life, taking her for swimming lessons and bike rides, in addition to helping coordinate her appointments. She is very attached to her father, sometimes crying inconsolably when he is away for more than a couple of days. He has been an important stabilizing factor in Lena's life and she will continue to need him in these early, formative stages.

As Farhaad, Manal, and Lena settled into their Northern Virginia life, I stayed in regular contact with Manal who seemed to be finally finding her rhythm after the difficulty of moving away from our family in Michigan. When she called me crying hysterically one day, barely able to speak, trying to explain Farhaad's newfound predicament, I was shocked and beyond angry. Simply put, how could such an intelligent person do something so foolish? We soon learned that he had a strong family history of mental illness and this was the only possible explanation for his

behavior. His actions have brought indescribable shame and disappointment to all of us, and he unquestionably bears that guilt with remorse.

The person I feel most sorry for is my sister who deserves so much better. As she was completely unaware of Farhaad's actions prior to detectives arriving at her doorstep, her life has been turned upside down from what it once was. It goes without saying that a period of incarceration for Farhaad will cause further unwarranted and collateral burden on my Manal, dragged into the nightmare that she has been living for the past two years with a complete loss of the prior certainty she once had regarding the future of her family and child.

However, the Farhaad I introduced to my dear younger sister 8 years ago is still the same, committed person today. He has been diligently seeking the medical help he needs and he is dedicated to rebuilding his reputation and his life. More importantly, Manal is committed to supporting him as seeks to rebuild his life. He is a gifted skin cancer surgeon who has just begun his career and he has the potential to help many more patients. I hope you will be lenient as he, and above all, his family have already suffered tremendously.

Respectfully,

Zuhair H. Peracha

Dennis Anthony Porto, MD, FAAD
Board-certified Dermatologist & Mohs Surgeon

200 Brookline Ave, Unit 707
Boston, MA 02215
+1-515-201-7667
dennisporto@alumni.harvard.edu

Dear Honorable Leonie Brinkema,

I am a skin cancer surgeon and have known Dr. Farhaad Riyaz on a professional and personal level for more than eight years. I have worked closely with Dr. Riyaz throughout that time and we became close friends. As with any long friendship, I have seen Farhaad during easy times and challenging times and have seen how he responds in these situations such that I feel that I can make an accurate assessment of his character. Without reservation, I know for certain that Farhaad is a good person, that he deeply regrets errors he has made in the past, and that these do not detract from his fundamental good and well-meaning nature. I'm also so encouraged by the progress he's making to recover his mental health.

I understand that Farhaad has pled guilty to what he is accused of, and I believe his contrition and his efforts to make amends are genuine. I am hoping that this letter offers a more complete picture of who Farhaad is as a person so as to demonstrate my strong conviction that Farhaad is a fundamentally good person who is a great asset to his community, his patients, and his family.

Farhaad chose a career in medicine because he is committed to the well-being of others. Like any physician, Farhaad has had to interact with difficult or disagreeable patients. I have seen Farhaad interact with such patients on many occasions, and where other physicians may be dismissive or cynical, Farhaad remains respectful and works tirelessly to meet their needs. For example, I have done skin cancer surgery with Farhaad on a patient who was saying negative things about Muslims. Farhaad is a devout Muslim himself, and despite the negative things said by this patient, Farhaad politely changed the subject with perfect professionalism and went on to spend hours with her to ensure her skin cancer had been completely removed and reconstructed before wishing her well.

Years ago, I began volunteering for a group called Physicians for Human Rights that performs free medical evaluations to support the refugee applications for those fleeing persecution of various forms in their home countries. I mentioned this off hand to Farhaad, and he immediately asked me for more detail, took the initiative to sign up for training, and has at this point completed many more refugee medical examinations than I have. This helps demonstrate the extent of Farhaad's altruism, especially towards those who are in a desperate situation.

In residency, Farhaad was elected Chair of the House Staff at Henry Ford Hospital, representing hundreds of resident physicians. I also was elected as Vice-Chair and therefore got to work closely with Farhaad which was an opportunity to see first-hand his advocacy for others. One of Farhaad's many responsibilities as Chair of the House Staff was to be the contact person for

resident physicians with complaints about their workplace. As an example, one such complaint was from a physician who was a new mom and didn't feel that there were adequate places for nursing in our already overcrowded Detroit hospital. Farhaad worked tirelessly with the administration at Henry Ford Hospital, the House Staff Council, and the physician involved to find creative ways to rearrange spaces to open lactation rooms for new moms. Even though Farhaad and I have finished residency and moved to our own practices, new physician mothers at Henry Ford Hospital continue to benefit from his advocacy.

While I have many more examples to share, I hope that these help demonstrate Farhaad's altruism, his value to his community, and his fundamental good nature. Thank you for considering this information in determining your judgement. I am always available should you have any questions or would like to speak more about this. Farhaad has been such a force for good in my life and in the life of countless others through his work, volunteerism, community, and family lives and he is a personal inspiration to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Porto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Dennis Porto, MD, FAAD
Board-certified dermatologist and Mohs surgeon

Perry Summers
1350 E St SE Apt 340
Washington, DC 20003
443-225-9009
perrysummers011@gmail.com

The Honorable Leonie Brinkema,

I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Farhaad Riyaz for the past two years as his medical assistant. From his first day with the practice, he quickly established his reputation as an approachable mentor, skilled surgeon, and valued member of the community. Dr. Riyaz not only prioritizes impeccable surgical outcomes in his professional career but does so while learning who his patients are as individuals and providing patient-centered care. Unlike other medical providers, he takes as much time as his patients need to explain all treatment options while considering the patient's individual lifestyle. He values his religion and, when applicable, understands the importance of religion in the lives of his patients. He ensures that suggested treatments align with a patient's work schedule, dietary regimen, prayer commitments and personal preferences. He frequently sets aside time throughout his day to meet with individuals seeking asylum and provides a pro bono analysis of their dermatologic state. After operating throughout the day, he frequently spends his nights volunteering at the local free clinic and visiting the hospital for dermatologic consults. His care for patients extends beyond the clinic, as every patient has access to his personal cellphone and understands they can call him with any questions or concerns. I worked closely with Dr. Riyaz these past few years and can genuinely say that he cares for the wellbeing of his patients.

Dr. Riyaz has quickly grown to be a role model for many medical assistants within the practice and for me as I begin medical school next year. He never hesitates to text to see how I am doing after a rough day at work or take the time to advise me as I am transitioning in my career. Outside of the clinic, Dr. Riyaz is a caring father, respected colleague, and valuable member of the community.

I respect that you have found Dr. Riyaz guilty. I am writing this letter to provide a more complete picture of who he is as a person. Please do not hesitate to contact me to confirm any information within this letter.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,


Perry Summers